

Natural Communities of Louisiana



Spruce Pine-Hardwood Flatwood

Rarity Rank: S1/G1G2

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure

Synonyms: Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods

Ecological Systems: CES203.557 East Gulf Coastal Plain Southern Loblolly-Hardwood Flatwoods

General Description:

- Flatwoods type indigenous to the western Florida Parishes of southeast Louisiana
- Wetland variant occupies poorly drained flats, depressional areas and small drainages (sometimes called “slashes”) that lie in a mosaic with higher, non-wetland areas which support a mesic variant
- Both variants are distinguished by the prevalence of *Pinus glabra* (spruce pine) over *Pinus taeda* (loblolly pine), although loblolly is usually present at some level
- Hardwoods usually dominate the forest, but spruce pine can dominate areas within the stand
- Soils are hydric, acidic silt loams including the Encrow, Gilbert and Springfield series
- Soils are significantly higher in nutrient levels than those historically supporting the *Pinus palustris* (longleaf pine) communities occupying similar hydrologic settings immediately to the east
- Fire in these forests is considered very rare as fuel conditions are not conducive to fire and the component plant species are not fire adapted



Plant Community Associates of Wet Hardwood Flatwoods

Common overstory tree species include:

Pinus glabra (spruce pine)

Acer rubrum (red maple)

Fraxinus caroliniana (Carolina ash)

Fagus grandifolia (American beech)

Nyssa biflora (swamp blackgum)

Quercus laurifolia (laurel oak)

Quercus nigra (water oak)

Quercus phellos (willow oak)

Pinus taeda (loblolly pine)

Carya glabra (pignut hickory)

Fraxinus pennsylvanica (green ash)

Magnolia grandiflora (Southern magnolia)

Nyssa sylvatica (blackgum)

Quercus michauxii (swamp chestnut oak)

Quercus pagoda (cherrybark oak)

Liquidambar styraciflua (sweetgum)

Common midstory & understory species include:

Cephalanthus occidentalis (buttonbush)

Crataegus opaca (mayhaw)

Cornus foemina (swamp dogwood)

Arundinaria gigantea (switchcane)

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Common midstory & understory species continued:

Diospyros virginiana (persimmon)
Ilex opaca (American holly)
Morella cerifera (wax myrtle)
Sambucus canadensis (elderberry)
Styrax americanus (snowbell)
Vitis rotundifolia (muscadine)
Berchemia scandens (rattan vine)
Campsis radicans (trumpet creeper)

Ilex decidua (deciduous holly)
Itea virginica (Virginia willow)
Toxicodendron radicans (poison ivy)
Smilax spp. (greenbriars)
Viburnum dentatum (arrowwood)
Ampelopsis arborea (peppervine)
Brunnichia cirrhosa (ladies' eardrops)
Sabal minor (dwarf palmetto)

Common herbaceous & fern species include:

Boehmeria cylindrica (hempweed)
Chasmanthium spp. (spikegrasses)
Hypericum spp. (St. Andrew's cross)
Justicia ovata (waterwillow)
Onoclea sensibilis (sensitive fern)
Polygonum spp. (smartweed)
Panicum gymnocarpon (savannah panicgrass)
Thelypteris palustris (Southern shield fern)
Triadenum walteri (greater marsh St. John's wort)

Carex spp. (sedges)
Cyperus spp. (flatsedges)
Juncus spp. (rushes)
Ludwigia spp. (primrose willow)
Osmunda regalis (royal fern)
Rhynchospora spp. (beaksedge)
Saururus cernuus (lizard's tail)
Woodwardia areolata (netted chain fern)
Vernonia gigantea ssp. *gigantea* (ironweed)

Federally-listed plant & animal species: None

Range:

Occurs in a very narrow range in Livingston, East Baton Rouge and perhaps Ascension Parishes. Presettlement acreage is estimated at 50,000 to 100,000 acres with only 10 % currently remaining.

LA River Basins:

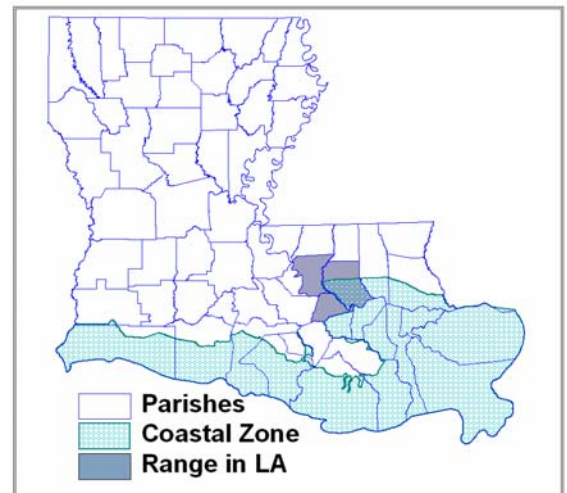
Pontchartrain, Mississippi

Threats:

- Residential or commercial development
- Construction of roads, pipelines or utilities
- Conversion to slash or loblolly pine plantations
- Hydrological alterations (to include adjacent areas)
- Invasive exotic species

Beneficial Management Practices:

- Prevent conversion of existing natural forests to other land uses
- Maintain natural species composition by following appropriate hardwood management techniques
- No harvesting during wet periods to prevent soil damage
- No bedding or other soil disturbance that may alter natural water flow patterns
- Remove any invasive exotic plant species with use of spot herbicides or mechanical means



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For more information, please visit our Web pages at

www.wlf.louisiana.gov/experience/naturalheritage or 225-765-2811

www.BTNEP.org or 1-800-259-0869